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CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM · LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO · PLP

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Communists Are Attacked

Teachers, Students and Parents Fight Back!



BROOKLYN, NY May 26 — More than one hundred students, teachers, and parents held a militant rally outside Clara Barton High School to fight an attack against two communist teachers. The protest was sparked by the principal launching an investigation against four teachers since last fall.

The teachers subsequently received a letter from the Special Commissioner of Investigation that detailed their political activities over the last several years and concluded that they had "recruited students to attend an unauthorized trip to [an anti-budget-cut] rally in Washington, D.C." The letter concluded, "It is the recommendation of this office that appropriate disciplinary action be taken against…." The teachers are still waiting for a decision on this disciplinary action, which was supposed to be handed down by May 27.

The day before the decision was due, the Department of Education (DoE) and its accomplices drew a resounding response at the rally. The protestors demanded an end to the investigation, and that no charges be lodged against these two teachers. Chants of "Fight back!" and "Education, not investigation!" rang out loud and clear. A student and a teacher gave excellent speeches attacking the DOE's racist and fascist methods (see below).

When the cops were called and stopped the use of our bullhorn, the picketers continued without it. The head of the security lied to students, telling them they had to move away from the school. When the crowd heard this, they started chanting "The principal is a liar, we'll set his ass on fire!" As they booed the security chief, he quickly ran back inside the school. The rally ended on a high note, with everyone marching through the neighborhood. The community was enthusiastic at the sight of young and old, black, Latino and white marching together!

A Fascist Culture of Investigations

The initial DOE investigation began in 2007, two years after the Katrina disaster, when Clara Barton teachers and students went to New Orleans over winter and summer vacations to help clean up the Ninth Ward, to organize against the racism of various government agencies, and to fight for communism. Racist principal Forman had tried to prevent these activities. He sent a letter to every parent to warn that trips to New Orleans were not school-approved. But he wasn't able to stop it.



In 2009, another Clara Barton contingent was among many PL'ers and friends who traveled to Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of John Brown's raid against slavery. Again, racist pig Forman warned of "disciplinary action" if teachers accompanied their students.

Once again, Threats Were Ineffective

Last October, members of the Clara Barton community boarded a UFT-sponsored bus and joined tens of thousands in Washington, D.C., to rally against the Tea Party. Thousands of CHALLENGEs were distributed throughout the day. Although the rally had been designed to win workers and students to the Democratic Party, Progressive Labor Party members organized our

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Afghanistan: TAPI Pipeline, Imperialist Rivalry Make U.S. Troop Withdrawal Impossible

Obama and his war counselors continue to engage in a tactical debate over the length and duration of the occupation in Afghanistan, as noted in the June 6 New York Times. But the United States' long-term strategic necessity to protect this valuable real estate was made plain in a brutal terror attack one week earlier.

On May 28, U.S. bombs killed five girls, seven boys, and two women as they slept in Afghanistan's Helmand province, one of the devastated areas (along with Kandahar province) that lie along the path of the TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) gas pipeline. At the time, U.S. puppet Afghan president Karzai was off in neighboring Turkmenistan, negotiating details of TAPI. The killings stem directly from this deal and exemplify the anti-worker violence inherent in capitalist competition.

Obama & Co. ordered the Helmand strike in retaliation for the death of a Marine whose job was to help secure the pipeline. It makes little difference whether the targeting was accidental or deliberate. Either way, U.S. rulers have been indiscriminately killing innocent civilians in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq for three decades. Their willingness to slaughter millions in this imperial exploit ranks with Hitler's terrorist V-2 rocket raids on London and the U.S. holocausts in Dresden, Tokyo, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki.



Dooted Line is TAPI

We shouldn't sell liberals like Obama short in their capacity for brutal terror. As Madeline Albright acknowledged in 2000 regarding the death of half a million Iraqi children from U.S.-imposed sanctions, "This is a very hard choice, but we think the price is worth it."

U.S. Rulers' Strategic Need to Occupy Afghanistan

Since the days of Bill Clinton, U.S. imperialists have treasured the notion of a gas route through Afghanistan. In 1998, U.S. Unocal (now owned by Chevron) stood on the brink of a pipeline contract with the Taliban, the local force that the U.S. armed to the teeth, enabling them to rule the country.

But the fundamentalist Taliban double-crossed its U.S. bosses — twice. First, the Taliban rejected Unocal and inked a pact with Argentine energy conglomerate Bridas (now half-owned by China). Second, the Taliban played host to al Qaeda, another U.S. creation-turned-enemy. In response, following plans drawn up long before 9/11, the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in 2001.

Today, Taliban forces challenge U.S. occupiers for control of TAPI. But as important as this potential energy bonanza may be, it's the prospect of future wars against far more threatening rivals that motivates the Pentagon's Afghan effort. As Khalil Nouri, a member of U.S. imperialists' Afghanistan Study Group, boasts, "[TAPI] consolidates NATO's political and military presence in the strategic high plateau that overlooks Russia, Iran, India, Pakistan and China….TAPI proves a perfect setting for the alliance's future projection of military power for 'crisis management' in Central Asia" (Examiner.com, 5/19/11).

In other words, TAPI offers both control over critical energy resources and a military beachhead for future U.S. interventions in the area.

Forget About Obama's Afghan Pull-out

These long-term geopolitical factors explain why the liberal Brookings Institution boosts VP Biden's Afghan plan that "would keep an average of perhaps 50,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan over the coming year, 30,000 the following year and 20,000 in the country thereafter, indefinitely" (Brookings website, 6/3/11).

Meanwhile, Obama's outgoing Defense Secretary Robert Gates spoke doubletalk to say that U.S. troops in Afghanistan weren't going anywhere soon: "Between the successes we have already enjoyed and the increased capacity of the Afghan forces, we are in a position — based on conditions on the ground, as the president has said — to consider some modest drawdowns beginning in July" (USA Today, 6/5/11). Translation: Because of U.S. failures and the incompetence of Afghan forces, GIs will remain in Afghanistan for a long time.

So the carnage will continue. It will stop only when its root cause — the profits that come from military control of resources or strategic advantage over capitalist rivals — is demolished. We need a communist revolution to destroy the current dog-eat-dog system and replace it with egalitarian, working-class rule.✪

OUR FIGHT

✯Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✯Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✯Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✯While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✯Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.

✯Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✯Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✯Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✯Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✯Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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Why Articles Are Not Signed

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual. While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

CIA Created Taliban

(This is an excerpt from an interview in 2000 from the Indian Times where a U.S. crony exposes the CIA creation of the Taliban.)

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) worked in tandem with Pakistan to create the "monster" that is today…Taliban, a leading US expert on South Asia said here.

"I warned them that we were creating a monster," Selig Harrison from the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars said at the conference…on "Terrorism and Regional Security: Managing the Challenges in Asia."

Harrison said: "The CIA made a historic mistake in encouraging Islamic groups from all over the world to come to Afghanistan." The U.S. provided $3 billion for building up these Islamic groups, and it accepted Pakistan's demand that they should decide how this money should be spent, Harrison said….he had meetings with CIA leaders at the time when Islamic forces were being strengthened in Afghanistan. "They told me these people were fanatical, and the more fierce they were the more fiercely they would fight the Soviets," he said. "I warned them that we were creating a monster."

Mass Class Struggle Needed vs. Racist Transit Bosses

NEW YORK CITY — A week after a wheel fell off an in-service bus in Queens, and six months before the largest city transit worker contract expires, TWU (Transport Workers Union) Local 100 safety inspectors found 96 unsafe buses at the College Point bus depot on May 25. The disregard of the MTA (Metropolitan Transit Authority) for safety and the workers' enforcement of their contract effectively shut down morning rush-hour service.

Like all capitalists and their loyal bureaucrats, the MTA management responded to Local 100's safety inspection by putting profits first. Workers' tax dollars, transit workers' labor and riders' fares enable the MTA to pay Wall Street investors $1.2 billion interest in profits. These payments increase annually, coming from worker layoffs, reduced service and maintenance.

Management's job is to preserve those profits, above all. So instead of dealing with the safety problems that put passengers and operators in danger, depot supervisors took four bus operators out of service for refusing to drive unsafe buses. Communism, a worker-run society without profits and bosses, would put the needs of the international working class first.

This latest attack on transit follows two years of layoffs, delays in transit worker raises, fare hikes, and deteriorating service. One of the four out-of-service operators, a shop steward with two unrelated pending charges, faces dismissal. (Another bus operator with no disciplinary record is now back in service.) These latest attacks on transit workers, along with the dangerous conditions that sparked them, are inherently racist because they strike the majority black, Latino, and immigrant riders and workers hardest.

Militant job actions, such as safety shutdowns, are workers' best response to these racist attacks. But the political line that drives the militancy matters as much as the actions themselves. Under a capitalist system, the bosses who run society will inevitably take away a "good" contract or decent safety measures over time. U.S. public-sector workers, who represent 20 percent of all black workers, are under the gun from politicians of all the bosses' parties.

For the most part, union leaders throughout the U.S. are diverting workers' anger to vote for "friends in high places." Their idea of "militancy" is to stage symbolic actions that blow off steam but do nothing to hurt the ruling class. For lasting progress, workers need to overthrow the bosses in revolution and build a communist society where workers will hold state power, where they will labor for our class's need, not bosses' profit.

Without this long-term communist outlook, short-term reform victories only promote the illusion that the capitalist system can work. The reality is that capitalist competition is forcing U.S. bosses to wipe out the few gains public-sector workers have made in order to maximize profits. That's the only way the ruling class can pay for imperialist wars and bank and auto bailouts. Without communist goals, defeats like those sweeping the public sector can made workers cynical about mass class struggle. Only organizing for a mass communist movement can turn temporary defeats into lessons for long-term victories of revolution and workers' power.

TWU Local 100 is planning a demonstration at College Point depot and has placed the three remaining out-of-service operators on the union's release-time payroll until they are back in service. Many transit workers are furious at the MTA for pulling such a stunt. "The supervisor should be in jail," fumed one bus operator from East New York Depot. As we go to press, PLP is organizing to defend these operators and to take rank-and-file actions against the bosses. Stayed tuned to see how CHALLENGE readers can help.✪

Politicians, Union Hacks Collaborate to Close Hospitals and Attack Workers

BROOKLYN, May 26 — Nurses, maintenance staff and clerical workers occupied the lobby of the Brookdale University Hospital Medical Center. These workers are Fighting against a pattern of racist hospital closures and cutbacks affecting workers in nearly 500 hospitals. The 3,500 workers in this hospital in the Brownsville neighborhood have lost their health insurance coverage because Brookdale has fallen behind in paying $23 million to their benefits fund.

The Brookdale administration claims that it fell behind on payments over the past six months due to its well-publicized financial struggles. But apparently the hospital's parent company, MediSys Health Systems, had enough money to bribe State Senator Carl Kruger and Assemblyman William F. Boyd, Jr.

In March, federal prosecutors unveiled a criminal case against CEO David F. Rosen, who received millions of dollars in state and city grants and other favors in exchange for giving the politicians fake but well-paid "consulting" jobs. MediSys is also the parent of Jamaica Hospital Medical Center, another major hospital close to bankruptcy. This obscene corruption is nothing new under capitalism, and will remain the norm until workers remove profits from healthcare entirely by smashing it with communist revolution. The fight-back at Brookdale can be one step in that direction.

Brownsville is one of New York City's poorest neighborhoods, and is 96% black and Latino. For insurance, the community relies primarily on Medicaid, which was cut this April by $2.8 billion. According to a May 2010 study by the Fiscal Policy Institute, unemployment here is 15% to 20%, or about twice the city's 9.2% average.This excludes from the unemployment rate : the overworked, underpaid, and job-hunters, and those who've given up.

The infant mortality rate is on par with Mexico's — at 16.7 deaths per 1,000 live births — whereas the U.S. national average is 6.3 deaths per 1,000 births. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, only 32% of the population has a high school diploma, and the neighborhood contains the highest concentration of public housing projects in the United States.

In addition, Brownsville residents suffer epidemic proportions of chronic, racism-induced conditions like hypertension, asthma, diabetes, and obesity, more than double the rate of white workers just a few miles away in Long Island.

As they face the brunt of the current economic crisis, black and Latino workers depend on Brookdale as the sole provider of health care in the entire community. Now the hospital's bosses, after receiving millions of dollars in political favors, cry that they're too poor to insure their own workers.

In a city where eight hospitals have shut down in the past five years, these racist attacks on Brookdale Hospital workers and the community of Brownsville are being done deliberately to increase profits. (*See box.*) But since healthcare costs continue to spiral as more workers suffer capitalist-induced diseases, workers are forced to swallow the bitter pill of worse care in fewer available hospitals and clinics At the same time, healthcare providers' wages and benefits are driven down. The Brookdale bosses demonstrate that healthcare under capitalism — whether it's labeled "Obamacare," "single-payer," "non-profit," or "for-profit"— will always fail the working class and unleash racist misery, especially on black and Latino workers.

The union representing these workers, Local 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, is no friend of those it claims to serve. While trumpeting its legal victory for the occupation after Brookdale attempted to get a court injunction, 1199 has followed the footsteps of the UAW for years, negotiating wage-cut contracts while refusing to mobilize its more than 260,000 mostly black and Latino members in the city againsts a single hospital closure.

Instead of relying on union misleaders, our PLP club is mobilizing its members and CHALLENGE readers within 1199 SEIU and the hospitals and communities. We're working to support an informational picket in front of Brookdale Hospital on June 15. By making contacts and distributing CHALLENGE, we plan to help fan the flames of anti-racism in this fight-back and continue strengthening our growing work in area hospitals and communities. We encourage all Party members and friends to distribute CHALLENGEs and join us on June 15!✪

The Reality Behind the 'Non-profit' Hospital

Many hospitals in the United States refer to themselves as "non-profit," or (in an an older term) "voluntary non-profit." They are, however, just as profit-driven as their "for-profit" counterparts. The biggest difference is that "for-profit" hospitals pay taxes while "non-profit" hospitals do not because they supposedly perform a "community benefit." According to a March 12, 2007 article in the *Fort Wayne (Indiana) Journal-Gazette*:

"…some of the things that non-profits count as community benefit are things that for-profit [hospitals] consider the cost of doing business…"

"A non-profit tax expert [says]… there is no standard for what constitutes a 'community benefit.' That allows nonprofit hospitals to set their own rules."

"This core myth that non-profits exist to serve the poor was never true. …it was never the historic reason for it… they're not required to serve the poor, they're not required to lose money, [and] they're not required to underpay their employees."

Protesting Peter King's Anti-Muslim Racism

"The people united will never be defeated!" rang through the main street of Massapequa Park, outside the office of Rep. Peter King, the U.S. congressman who is building racism and xenophobia by holding hearings on Muslims. Eighty people chanted after one of the keynote speakers spoke of the need for unity of all people against bigotry, racism and hatred. By providing communist leadership to this movement, we can demonstrate that racism is a tool of the larger, systemic problem that is capitalism.

People from peace groups, church groups and others united to speak out against King's poisonous ideas and to help build a new and growing coalition. There were many different ideologies within the circle of demonstrators chanting on the street that day. But almost everyone joined in chants like, "Muslims, Christians, Jews unite. We're all in the same fight." There were cops on the street and a handful of King supporters who were shouting their usual garbage about demonstrators "not being Americans."

The various groups that are working to develop relationships and build the movement against racism and xenophobia face a long and uphill struggle. A number of cars drove past; some people hooted at us while others supported us. About half the demonstrators and some passers-by took CHALLENGE.

The church group that sponsored the demonstration also organized a march against AgroProcessors for their abuse of Mexican-born workers, as well as a march in Staten Island against racist attacks on Latinos. These were other examples of uniting people against racism. All of these struggles grew out of church forums to educate members and friends about the particular manifestations of racism. We are getting better at developing these actions. We will do more and become stronger as the struggle continues.✪

MAY DAY 2011

PL'ers Bring Communist Politics



BOGOTA, COLOMBIA, May 1 — Over 60,000 people participated in the May Day march, commemorating the day of the International working class. There were courageous youth who hissed and ridiculed harassing cops and politicians claiming to be the saviors of the working class. There were trade union misleaders demanding more crumbs from the capitalist system, and groups of peasants and indigenous communities, displaced by violence, denouncing state and paramilitary crimes.

There were relatives of the disappeared demanding justice, workers in low-paying jobs denouncing their abusive bosses, groups of teachers and students rejecting the privatization of public education. Doctors and nurses denounced the enormous theft of healthcare resources. Opportunists of every shade and color sabotaged the event with loud whistles and without any slogans, dancing as if in a carnival.

Members of PLP began the distribution of more than 3,000 revolutionary fliers and the selling of CHALLENGE very early. Comrades and friends, women and men, arrived in small groups to avoid police harassment. We organized ourselves behind our signs and proudly raised the red flag with the distinctive symbols of our Party.

We all, workers and students, enthusiastically chanted:

"Changing presidents, kings or dictators do not free us from the yoke!"

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May Day Sparks Conversations About Racism

Organizing for May Day at a local Boeing subcontractor helped spark a discussion about racism among workers. With many of these workers coming from Latin America and Southeast Asia the issues of racism, particularly anti-immigrant racism, hit close to home.

One worker, a Latino who grew up in Southern California, was surprised to learn that racism continued not because it was "natural," but because it was profitable. After a lengthy discussion that involved many questions, he began to see how capitalists use racism to lower wages and attack workers. The next day he came in with examples from his long work history of how he witnessed racism being used against workers.

Other workers used the discussion of racism and May Day to focus on the increasing brutality of Seattle's racist police department. People questioned the destruction of the house of Maurice Clemmon's aunt where police fired over 70 tear gas canisters into her small two bedroom home in search of Clemmon. Recent high-profile incidents of police assaults and the police murder of Native American woodcarver John T. Williams elicited angry remarks.

May Day has served to rouse workers' anger about the racist injustices of the capitalist system. I will work harder to get CHALLENGE to these workers and turn this anger into communist politics. These discussions over May Day can help prepare us to battle the speed-up and attacks on our wages and benefits that are coming down the pipeline.

Red Beard

Building Class-consciousness

The international PLP is a revolutionary communist organization. Members of PLP have taken on the task of forging the "new worker" and are attempting to achieve the main goal: to educate the proletariat. We need to develop workers' class consciousness in order to reject the capitalist employee mentality. Only then, can these politically conscious workers carry out revolutionary principles. Youth play a very important role in developing this consciousness.

Our youth carry on political work during the school year and on their vacations. The most committed proletarians attempt to integrate their base and their political work. We are a small Party, but a very committed one. We struggle to become a mass Party, where we educate our class on communist principles. We must sweep away and destroy the imperialists from life on this earth.

Communist revolution implies not simply a few changes in capitalist relations. This reformist idea will only keep capitalism untouched at the roots. For this reason, our PLP contingent marched under the battle calls of:

Our focus this May Day celebration was internationalism and anti-imperialism and solidarity with the rebellious proletariat in Africa and Asia. We also recognized the revolutionary role of women in the class struggle and celebrated the centennial of the International Women's Day.

"Down with capitalist nationalism, Long live internationalist communism!"

"No to Reformism, Long live communism!"

"Racism and Paramilitaries support capitalism!"

"In Africa and the Middle East, only communism will make a difference!"

During the march, a few curious and enthusiastic trade-unionists and teachers took copies of our slogans to pass around and show to their students and co-workers. We distributed all our Party literature, especially CHALLENGE.

Towards the end of the march, fascism in Colombia showed its true nature in the form of the police, who used water blasts, stunt grenades, rubber bullets, and clubs to disperse the crowd. There were more than 15 people wounded and 53 arrested in Bogotá and as many in Cali and Medellin.

The majority of those arrested and wounded were disaffected youth, who are sick of this putrid capitalist society that is engaged in a deadly inter-imperialist confrontation. We must remember that the new president is a murderous puppet, whose job is to protect the global economic-financial interests. That's why militant comrades and friends proclaim in a single voice: "Communism and Revolution are the Best Education!" ✪

Comrades in Colombia

No Recovery for Economic Crisis
Workers Must Fight Capitalist System

The New York Times (NYT) reported on May 31st that housing prices fell for the eighth straight month and hit the lowest level since the current depression began. According to *ShadowStats*, the actual unemployment rate has crept back up to 22.3%, despite a brief dip down to 22% in March as seasonal employment began to pick back up. Consumer spending has remained flat as wages continue to fall, despite a small spike due to rising gas and food prices.

The April index of pending deals (a measurement of anticipated home sales) dropped well below a predicted 1% dip to a collapse of 11.6%. With continuing high unemployment and mass wage-cuts, workers are in no position to buy a house in a market flooded with foreclosed homes.

According to the NYT (5/22), banks currently own 872,000 foreclosed properties and in are in the process of foreclosing on one million more. As long as this massive shadow inventory of homes exists, housing prices will continue to fall.

In his blog, economist and NYT columnist Paul Krugman (5/25) proposed that the U.S. is entering a third great depression, less like the Great Depression of the 1930s and more like the Long Depression that dragged on for four decades, from 1873 to the start of World War One. Workers should be warned that both the Long Depression and the Great Depression were worldwide crises in the capitalist imperialist economic system, and that they were "alleviated " only by world wars.

A blogger writing on the continuing depression comments, "Congress just doesn't seem to 'get it.' They don't understand what people are going through" (Mike Whitney, *Counterpunch*, 5/27). Yet the facts are so obvious and the government's effort to confuse it is so thorough that one would be hard-pressed to conclude that the capitalist class and their political minions don't "get it."

Capitalists Use Crisis to Attack Workers

Capitalists are predictably using this crisis as an excuse to launch an attack on workers in the U.S. that is unprecedented in the modern era. Using national and state debt as an excuse, legislators have begun to undo the last vestiges of the social safety net that capitalists reluctantly put into place under the New Deal. These 1930s reforms were aimed to deflect the anger of workers who were organizing mass protests and industrial unions with Communist Party leadership.

Unemployment and welfare benefits are being cut when they are needed most. The recent attacks on government workers' unions have largely finished off what remained of the right of workers to organize. At the same time, banks have been granted unprecedented power over workers' financial livelihoods and bosses given huge leeway in their right and ability to abuse and exploit their workers.Capitalism survives on workers' blood. This parasitic system will continue to breed sexism, racism, poverty and imperialist wars.

The working class can only combat this blatant capitalist attack by organizing for a class war of our own. Multi-billionaire Warren Buffet was correct when he said, "There's class warfare, alright, but it's my class that's making war, and we're winning" (NYT 11/26/06).

PLP urges workers to join with us in organizing a mass, revolutionary communist party. Only such a party, with a communist analysis of the capitalist system, can lead the fight to smash capitalist exploitation once and for all.✪

India: Capitalism Continues to Murder Workers

A recently released report from the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice (*Every Thirty Minutes*, 2011) revealed that farmers in India are committing suicide at a rate of one every thirty minutes. During the past sixteen years, more than a quarter of a million farmers in India have committed suicide: a tragedy due to the ever-growing cycle of debt that U.S. agro-companies like Monsanto force on Indian farmers.

The IMF and World Bank, institutions controlled by U.S. and European imperialists, have forced market liberalization on India which means the elimination of government subsidies and government-backed loans to farmers. The introduction of U.S. agribusiness, particularly Monsanto, into the region has strong-armed many farmers to being dependent on seeds and fertilizers that are far more expensive than local varieties.

This economic imperialism has thrown agriculture in India into crushing poverty with most farmers making only $250 for an entire year of labor. Many of those who have committed suicide have done so by consuming the very pesticides that put them into so much debt. These victims of capitalism have left heart-wrenching suicide notes addressed to the Indian Prime Minister begging for assistance.

History of Imperialism

But as all capitalists are loyal only to profits, the Indian government has continued to pursue these murderous reforms. This story mirrors the history of Western imperialism in India that is soaked in the blood of the working class.

When British imperialists first visited India in the 18th century they commented on the country's immense wealth. In 1757 one Briton described Dacca in Bengal as being as "extensive, populous, and rich as the city of London." Another observer described the region as "a wonderful land, whose richness and abundance neither war, pestilence, nor oppression could destroy." A 1918 report of the British Royal Industrial Commission remarked that "the industries of India were far more advanced than those of the West up to the advent of the industrial revolution."

With Britain's official declaration of dominance over India in 1793, all that changed. Indian industry was systematically destroyed, much of it carted off back to Britain. By 1840 the population of Dacca had fallen from 150,000 to 30,000. Writing in 1835 a British official wrote of India, "The misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of the cotton-weavers are bleaching the plains of India." In the final years of British imperial control conditions worsened. Between 1881 and 1939 life expectancy dropped in India from 30 years to a mere 23 years.

This history of imperialist murder has called out for workers there to join the communist movement and indeed many great communist leaders such as Rajani Palme Dutt came from India.

Workers in India have a great legacy of fighting imperialism, but if they ever hope to smash the imperialist menace that has haunted them for more than 200 years they need to link arms with the international revolutionary communist party, PLP. Only workers uniting together under the banner of communism can smash capitalism and its racist murderous imperial system once and for all.✪

Clara Barton

continued from front page

own march within the big rally. We chanted many anti-racist and pro-communist slogans.

On the Monday following the Saturday rally, the assistant principal of security questioned some students as they entered the school. One was visibly carrying a copy of CHALLENGE. This led to an interrogation by the principal and assistant principal, with students asked to give up names of others who attended the rally. Then their parents were called. The parents were angry that their children had been intimidated and harassed by these creeps. In every case, the parents had either attended the rally themselves or given their signed permission for their children to go. They all knew that it was not a school-sanctioned trip. "My weekend, my business" became the rallying cry.

After the principal relayed this development to the DOE's Special Commissioner of Investigations, all the students and parents were called into the school again. The four teachers, who attended the rally, were also called in. None of them had anything to say to these DOE bureaucrats.

PLP Members Fight Racism!

Meanwhile, Clara Barton is becoming more a jail than a school. The latest punitive policy from the dean's office is detention, which is now imposed for the most trivial violations of the dress code. But detention has nothing to do with education. It's an instrument of political control and intimidation.

Our school reflects the extreme racism built into the capitalist system. Serving mainly black and Latino students, it receives less funding from the DOE than the "specialized" schools which have high populations of white and Asian students. Clara Barton's large Haitian, bilingual population receives the worst treatment of all. Their classes are often taught by teachers who lack certification in the subject area. Students are treated like criminals by the deans and security. It is no coincidence that despicable racist pig Forman has targeted communists who fight these racist attacks.

Communism is Our Weapon Against the Bosses

It's not surprising that CHALLENGE was mentioned specifically in the warning letter given to Clara Barton students, or that the principal has singled out two teachers who are members of PLP.

Over the last several years, CHALLENGE has been distributed widely in the school, often 200 or more per issue. Teacher-student study groups meet regularly. The Party here has grown steadily.

Communists are dedicated to the liberation of the working class. The DOE bosses hope that they can frighten students or staff members from following our leadership, but this strategy has proven a failure so far. From Paul Robeson to W.E.B. DuBois, communists have always been attacked by the system. At Clara Barton, we have tried to point out that the administration wants us out of the school because we are outspoken fighters against racism and inequality.

Students and Parents Respond the Right Way!

The May 26 rally resulted from our strong and immediate response to the investigators' attack. But it couldn't have succeeded without years of organizing and support from our ties with parents at the school.

The DOE demanded "disciplinary action." We responded right back. "Education, Not Investigation." stickers went up all over the school. Flyers and CHALLENGEs were distributed outside the school. Students wrote their own flyer and started a petition inside the school.

On the day of the rally, some students escorted teachers Beckerman and Salak out of the building in a show of solidarity! The union held chapter meetings in support; the chapter leader even announced the protest on the school's PA system. And several hundred CHALLENGEs were in people's hands.

Although fascist despicable racist pig Principal Forman promised that the "disciplinary action" would come by May 27, there has been silence ever since. This is typical of the DOE's Gestapo tactics. Maybe they are waiting for the last day of school, or the summer — they like to do their dirty work when no one is around. Maybe we put a little scare into them. They should be scared, because we are not done fighting back! After all, the fight for a communist world is a lifetime struggle. We need to toughen up, not only for this fight but for the many more coming.✪

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in concise letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses around the world.

CHALLENGE: A Cure for Passivity

PLP Literature and CHALLENGE changed my life. It helped me recover from passivity. Now, I feel like I am doing real work for the revolution. I am proud of being a PL'er. Its Marxist outlook helped me understand the state of the world. Its analysis about the old communist movement helped me to understand the dialectics of the movement all over the world.

I enjoy using CHALLENGE to learn about the international class struggle. A recent article about the May Day celebration in Pakistan inspired me. Now, I am thinking of translating "Why Communism" into a leaflet and distribute it among the masses, for it is very much necessary for the working class in Bangladesh to know about communism.

The working class here never knew real communism because the phony communists promote a "Democratic Revolution" stage. They are not waging class struggle. Instead, they unite with the national bourgeoisie. These revisionists are doing the same thing as trade unionists of the CPM (a corporation) do in India: keep good relations with the ruling class.

PLP literature made it clear that we should be fighting towards a communist revolution. Only through class struggle can we build a mass PLP and have an armed revolution by millions of workers all over the world. "One Class, One world and One party" line is very much understandable in this world of universal capitalism. Love live PLP with a Red Salute!

Comrade in Bangladesh

No Compromise on Sexism

The June 8th editorial that very informatively showed the real motives behind the U.S. prosecution of Straus-Kahn (the sexist pig that headed the IMF) should have concentrated also on the hypocrisy of U.S. rulers with regard to violence against women. From Saudi Arabia to Pakistan and all around the world, U.S. capitalists finance and enable regimes that punish and jail working women who struggle for even the most minimal rights.

Violence, rape and sexual slavery are the life experience of hundreds of millions of women worldwide under capitalism. The profit drive turns women's bodies into commodities to be bought and sold, or to be used in degrading culture, pornography and provocative advertising. Capitalists use this terror and sexist portrayals of women to enforce and justify paying even less than the usual wage slavery levels to women workers, a super-exploitation similar to how racism oppresses black and immigrant workers. Working women are further exploited as "unpaid labor" for their socially necessary work in raising the next generation of workers.

From its beginning, PLP has made the struggle against sexism a major priority. From the Figure Flattery garment factory in the 1960s to the recent struggle at Stella Dora (where men and women workers struck against a sexist attack to lower the wages of the women workers), PLP has supported the struggles of women. It has worked to build the unity between men and women workers based on anti-sexist struggle that will be necessary to smash capitalist rule.

The PLP position that communism requires the abolition of wages would remove the material economic basis for sexist discrimination that results in lower-paid and unpaid labor. We must struggle with all workers, regardless of sex, to share in the necessary work. PLP has long struggled to put women in the leadership of the Party and class struggle; the PLP chairperson for years has been a woman, and women lead many areas of Party work. The Party understands that their experience of super-exploitation will make women especially dedicated and disciplined leaders in the life-long struggle for communism.

We make no compromise with sexism ever and our articles should reflect our hatred of the bosses' violence and sexist degradation of women workers worldwide.

A Comrade

Unity at Haiti Fundraiser

Singers all gathered on the stage in front of 140 people. They started to sing "Haiti Cherie" – first in Kreyol, and then in English. The audience joined the singing, in Kreyol and in English. The audience swayed as they sang. It had been an incredible evening, one that required a tremendous amount of work, but it was worth every second of time. A lot of money was collected for the good works the Haitian group performs in their hometowns and villages in Haiti.

We have been working with this group in our church for a little over a year. When the earthquake happened, we were asked to find a grass roots Haitian organization that we could form a friendship with. We jointly organized a forum on the current state of affairs in Haiti last fall, and attended a number of fundraisers that workers from Haiti arranged. Both the church group and the Haitian group met together on many occasions to set up this evening of dinner and entertainment in order to solidify a growing relationship.

At the beginning of the evening people tended to sit at tables with their own friends. The keynote speaker of the evening stood up and called upon audience to participate by moving to tables where there were people they did not know. The tables had multi-racial and a multi-ethnic makeup. People soon got over their awkwardness. Many conversations started and former strangers got to know each other as they ate and drank together.

The entertainers for the evening ran a gamut of songs from romance to struggle, from talk of home to talk of a better future for all workers. People spoke of the need for unity and demonstrated it in their friendship. Many joined in with some of the songs. The best show of unity during the evening was the clean-up which involved 40 people from all different backgrounds working side-by-side.

The room had a complicated and involved setup, and there was an enormous amount of equipment, tables, food, etc. that had to be organized. The entire clean-up took about 15 minutes because everyone spontaneously worked in unison, helping each other. A five-person detail was supposed to have put things away. Instead everyone helped. It was amazing and a wonderful show of unity.

Quite a few people who were in the room read CHALLENGE and some feel a commitment to a more struggle-oriented future. But here we were all together as brothers and sisters, and the embracing at the end and the singing of "Haiti Cherie" sealed the evening with harmony. Two communities brought together which would not under normal circumstances have had any contact with each other. We were brought together by the hard work and determination of a number of individuals in both groups. The future is bright because the present is full of purpose.

International comrade

Bogota May Day

continued from page 4

"Democracy is a capitalist farce, organize communist revolution"

"Reject every capitalist option, Always lead with communism!"

"One working class, one communist world, and one Progressive Labor Party!"

"Against capitalist usury, a communist worker state!"

"Take advantage of capitalist wars to organize communist revolution!"

Several groups participating in the march chanted along and joined our contingent, which grew to almost a hundred strong. A group of workers insisted on sharing their lunch with us to express support for the revolutionary politics of PLP.

During the march, we advanced as far as Plaza Bolivar, where we sang the *Internationale*, but soon after, as is often the case, we had to face police brutality in the form of tear gas, stunt explosions and water cannons.

We made many contacts with the workers and students we had met. We plan to take advantage of this capitalist crisis to politicize workers' struggles and direct them towards an international communist revolution.✪



Combat Capitalist Culture with Communism

PL Culture Committee Growing

Members of the recently-reorganized Culture Committee of PL continue to struggle over ideas for presentations to counter the bourgeois culture that surrounds us with the hatreds and anti-working-class propaganda of the ruling class and their mass media. Our discussion reviewed the pre-May Day event we organized in April.

We conceived of the idea of a No Borders event to counter the vicious attacks upon undocumented immigrants called "illegal" or "alien" by the bosses' press. As was pointed out at a demonstration in Staten Island, "How could anyone from the Earth be an alien?" If anyone is alien, it's the bosses who don't care if workers live or die. They use us like pawns, an important cultural understanding. We produced the show, touching on the many facets of anti-immigrant propaganda that are becoming prevalent through media outlets and popular culture in the United States.

We opened the show with a little musical presentation that spoke to the need to smash all borders. Our poetry and song reflected the common humanity of ordinary people struggling in the face of the enormous obstacles that the rulers create to stop us from uniting. The show went on with excerpts from Paul Robeson's speech made at the Peace Bridge on the Canadian border because Robeson was not allowed to leave the U.S.

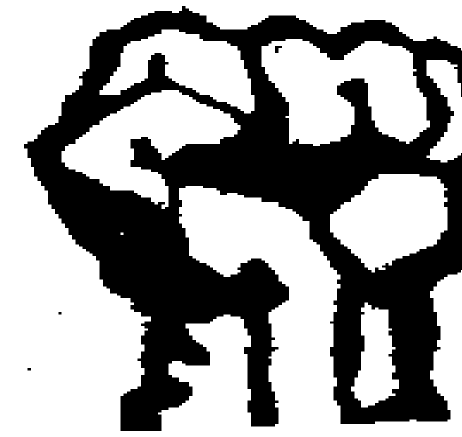
There was a great rendition of the Langston Hughes poem "Good Morning Revolution," spoken by many voices from the audience. An original poem from Haiti was read in both Kreyol and English. Our historical PL photo exhibit was also on display. The evening was a resounding success.

Next Event: The Fight Against Sexism

We are now moving on to organize another event with a theme of anti-sexism, and want to expand the committee to reflect the diversity of the Party. We are also developing a youth chorus to perform popular and revolutionary songs.

We are all positive about the possibility of developing the cultural work in the Progressive Labor Party. The tasks ahead are not easy, but the joy that the No Borders evening brought to the audience, the performers, and the organizers was evident. Since our reorganization, the committee has presented a variety music show as a fundraiser against racist police violence. It included a photographic exhibition of historical PL, anti-racist, and pro-communist struggle, along with a revue of song and poetry on the theme of No Borders.

Join with us to develop the youth chorus and expand the cultural work that can inspire workers to smash the racist, sexist, and individualistic culture that capitalist rulers try to use to keep workers divided and passive. Our communist voices will be heard!✪ *Anyone interested in joining the committee should contact us through plp.org.)*



RED EYE ON THE NEWS

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

FBI guy let mob assault crusader

NYT, 5/22 — To the editor:…Some 16 years after the first two buses of Freedom Riders arrived in Alabama, the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan…bought suit against the F.B.I. on behalf of…two of the original 13 Freedom Riders. Walter Bergman was severely beaten when a mob of Ku Klux Klansmen attacked the Freedom Riders, first in Anniston, Ala., then again in Birmingham. He suffered a stroke and spent the remaining years of his life partially paralyzed and in a wheelchair.

The case was based on revelations about the role of F.B.I. paid informants in the Klan, one of whom took part in the brutal attack on the Freedom Riders.

In 1983, [a] United States District Court judge issued an eloquent opinion holding the F.B.I. responsible for the attack. The F.B.I. had advance knowledge of the planned attack and allowed it to happen. That part of the story should not be lost to history.

U.S. reveals oil motive in Iraq war

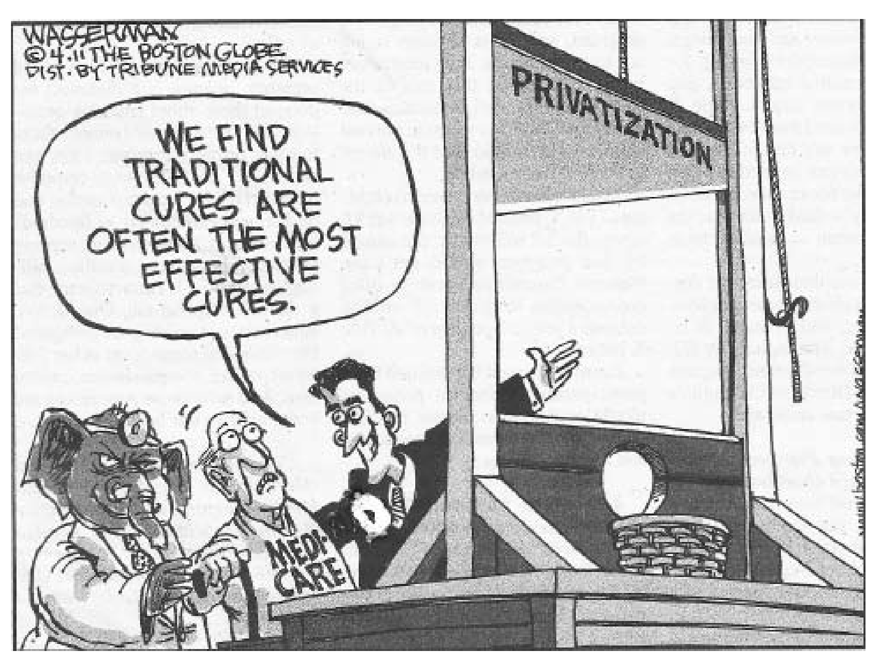
Thom Hartmann blog, 4/23 — …In the run-up to the Iraq war British Prime Minister Tony Blair called theories that the war was motivated by oil interests, "the most absurd." But according to memos recently released by the UK newspaper the Independent, Blair's denial is the only thing that's absurd. The memos show that the British Trade Minister assured BP and other energy firms that they would be given generous shares of Iraq's vast oil and gas reserves…Sure enough, after the invasion BP got a 20-year contract for oil production in Iraq, the largest ever contract in the history of oil production.

So now that it's clear the UK went to Iraq for oil are there any doubts that oil baron Dick Cheney did the same thing?

Extra borders for immigrant kids

NYT, 5/21 — …A recently published study of the early development of children born to [undocumented] immigrants in New York City suggests that most…do not end as well.

Even though the children have citizenship and live in an immigrant-friendly city,… many are still hobbled by serious developmental and educational deficits resulting from their parents' lives in the shadows....According to the study…. Hirokazu Yoshikawa, a Harvard education professor,….found that by the time the children…reached age two, they showed significantly lower levels of language and cognitive development than the children of "legal" immigrants and native-born parents….



…An estimated 91 percent — four million children — are American citizens…The researchers found that poor immigrants cannot afford learning materials or stimulating programs in child care centers. Fear of deportation…often prevents those parents from seeking help from the government agencies that provide child care subsidies or food stamps….

The psychological stress suffered by immigrants — many of whom work long hours for low wages and live in crowded, poorly maintained apartments — can be transmitted to young children, the study says.

"Greater hardship among parents, both economic and psychological," Professor Yoshikawa wrote, "can harm children's learning by lowering parents' active engagements with their children, the quantity or quality of their language or their warmth and responsiveness."

Hushing up bad sides of U.S. wars

Otherwords.org 5/17 — …Times have changed, with decisions on war quickly becoming back-page stuff. Our wars were scarcely discussed during the last congressional election campaign. How come?

A top reason for that inattention is our reliance on mercenaries. We don't use many actual troops anymore, thus precluding the need for a hated military draft. Private companies do much of the messy work, to the point where there is roughly one mercenary contractor in the war zone for every soldier. Afghans drive the trucks, Bangladeshis clean the latrines, Indians do the cooking, and former GIs do the security. No one knows just how many there are or how many get killed. They stay out of the limelight

Robots also simplify war. Drones have no loved ones back home to raise a ruckus when they crash….Further tamping is carried out by the press itself…The suffering of local citizens and atrocities committed by U.S. soldiers are played down, while heroism and camaraderie among the troops are played up. Duty and honor lead the story, while official callousness and bungling usually fail to make it into print….

Meanwhile…it takes about $1 million to support one GI in Afghanistan for a year.

U.S. oil biz helps 'worst' nations

NYT, 5/31 — Officially and unofficially, Americans do business with one of the undisputed human rights global bad boys, Equatorial Guinea, Africa's fourth biggest oil exporter. Its widely criticized record on basic freedoms has offered little barrier to broad engagement…

American oil companies have billions of dollars invested here….Freedom House, the watchdog group, has ranked Equatorial Guinea among the nine most repressive "worst of the worst" nations in the world…. "They don't even hide the torture instruments." ….Despite the government's oil wealth, little has trickled down to the impoverished population. The interest of the Americans here is money." ….77 percent of the population lives below the poverty line….Infant mortality has actually increased since the discovery of oil here in the 1990s, the World Bank said.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

World Cup and Olympics Prep Devastates Workers' Lives in Brazil

With the largest economy and armed forces in Latin America, and the eighth-largest economy in the world, Brazil is poised to mount a challenge to U.S. dominance in the hemisphere. Already a member of the G-20 (the leading capitalist powers that guide the international financial system) and of BRIC (the counter-U.S. bloc that also includes emerging powers Russia, India, and China), Brazil now seeks a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

To advance its position, the Brazilian ruling class is busy strengthening its imperialist credentials around the world as it imposes police fascist terror at home.

As the military leader of MINUSTAH, the U.N. occupation force in Haiti that terrorizes the populace in the name of "security," Brazil has spearheaded numerous atrocities since 2004, from a massacre in the City Soleil neighborhood of Port-au-Prince to the murder of union leaders and students. But Brazil's brutal rulers were just getting started.

The Brazil-Israel Security Connection

In late 2010, Brazil signed a "historic" security cooperation agreement with Israel that could generate billions of dollars in classified procurement contracts between top Israeli defense manufacturers and various Brazilian security agencies (*Xinhua*, 12/2/2010).

Beyond giving Israel a platform to penetrate other South American markets, these arms deals will provide Brazil's ruling class with the tools it needs (including Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and advanced satellite surveillance technology) to contain guerrilla uprisings on the continent.

"Homeland security" is a growing concern for the Brazilian ruling class as the country prepares to host the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016. The Israeli arms industry will be the merchant/consultant for security arrangements for these events — a role for which it is more than qualified. Six of the seven companies competing for these contracts have been implicated in war crimes or in espionage, or both.

The biggest military contractors active in Brazil — Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) and Elbit Systems — supplied the occupying Israeli army with the guns used for war crimes against the Palestinians in Gaza, according to the Richard Goldstone mission for the UN Human Rights Council. In particular, the Tavor rifle being produced for Brazil has been tried out in Israeli army attacks against Palestinian communities.

These companies have undermined the Geneva Conventions and a 2004 ruling by the International Court of Justice, the legal fig leaves that imperial powers are quick to discard whenever they conflict with their ruling-class interests.

Clearing the Favelas for Ruling-Class Sport

The same army and police that have brutalized workers in Haiti are now demolishing the shantytown favelas of Rio de Janeiro, leaving tens of thousands of residents without homes. They are destroying whole communities of the poor in a number of Brazilian cities to make way for the World Cup and Olympic stadium mega-projects, which produce huge profits for the local ruling class and international bankers.

As one local organizer said, "You can see that these projects will truly be constructed with the objective of driving out the impoverished inhabitants, to 'clean up' the city and bring in real estate investors to these areas.″

In neighborhoods throughout Sao Paulo, as many as 90,000 families stand to be evicted. Similar disasters loom in Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre, Horizonte, and Fortaleza.

Plans for alternative housing are inadequate at best. Workers will be forced to move 30 miles or more outside their cities, far from available jobs and typically in insecure areas. Compensation will be minimal, not nearly enough to find acceptable new housing elsewhere.

As the UN's Raquel Rolnik admitted, "There are no mega-projects without mega-operations of eviction. With these projects we are producing more homeless."

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Afghanistan. See page 2

According to Brazil's 2000 census, the country had a deficit of 6.6 million housing units, which amounts to 20 million homeless people, or more than 10 percent of the population. As the World Cup and Olympic projects roll on, these numbers will continue to rise even more sharply.

Brazilian Workers Must Fight Back

As workers have begun to unite against these evictions, the fake Brazilian left has yet to voice any protest over the plight of these thousands of workers — or of the masses who suffer under capitalist rule. Of Brazil's total population of 187 million, 55 million live in extreme poverty.

According to a state study from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, 82 percent of Brazilian children and adolescents are illiterate. Half a million children between 7 and 14 don't go to school at all.

These conditions reflect the capitalists' greed and a system where the families of workers don´t matter. But mobilization and struggle can help prepare the residents to fight against the financial system and the politics that support them.

Friends of PLP and readers of CHALLENGE are working within tenant organizations to fight against the big capitalist housing interests. Building closer relations with the members of these groups — and expanding distribution of CHALLENGE — will strengthen workers' political understanding and build a base for an international communist movement.

This will lead to the happy ending of the destruction of today's voracious system and its replacement by a comunist society based on need, not profit.✪